

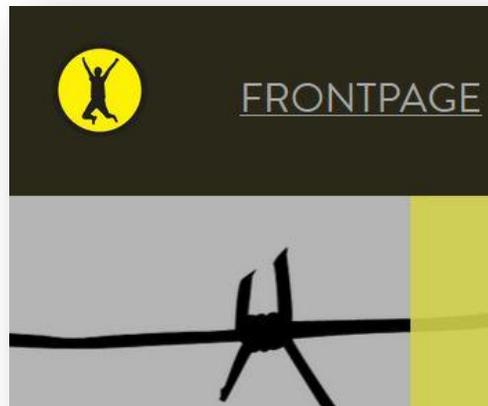


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## Albany County DA David Soares Unveils “Frontpage” Website to Combat Sex Trafficking



**ALBANY, NY** - District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that a new resource page was added to the Albany County District Attorney’s Office website. This webpage is titled “Frontpage” and offers an informational array of resources and services about the crime of sex trafficking. This webpage is accessible by clicking on the Frontpage logo on: [www.albanycountyda.com](http://www.albanycountyda.com)

In addition to defining “sex trafficking,” this webpage includes public service announcements, a

list of local, statewide, and national resources, and a list of recent sex trafficking cases prosecuted by the Albany County District Attorney's Office. The need for this webpage stems from the emergence of local cases that involve postings on the website "Backpage.com."

District Attorney Soares has long championed efforts to expand the approach to combatting crimes that involve vulnerable populations and improving access to victim services for these populations. These cases are prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys in the Special Victims Unit (SVU). The Special Victims Unit, comprised of six attorneys, two investigators and a legal secretary, is dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Crimes Against Children, Elder Abuse, cases involving Mental Health populations and Animal Cruelty.

The SVU utilizes a victim centered model, working to minimize further trauma, in the pursuit of justice for our victims and safety for our community. Unit members team with local agencies, law enforcement, service providers and institutions to implement prevention strategies, enhance response and promote prosecution of offenders. Recognizing that a strong community response to these types of crimes will effectuate the greatest change in the life of the individual victim as well as the larger community, SVU members actively participate in outreach and training for first responders, law enforcement and members of the public to help arm them with the knowledge and skills needed to both combat and prevent crime.

"Frontpage" resource page is also a welcome addition to the services offered by the Crime Victims Unit of the District Attorney's Office.

Being a victim of crime can be scary and overwhelming. Victims are often left with a sense of chaos, and it is the goal of the Crime Victims Unit to assist victims in regaining a sense of control. The Crime Victims Unit works in conjunction with government, community-based organizations, and non-profit agencies to ensure that victims are receiving comprehensive supportive services. This collaboration works to assist victims through the criminal justice process as well as through their healing process. Victim Witness Specialists from the District Attorney's Office assists victims of Felony level crimes in Albany County Court, while advocates from Albany County Crime Victims and Sexual Violence Center (CVSVC) work in the Albany County local courts, to assist victims of misdemeanor crimes. Collaboration with community partners helps us in our pursuit to ensure each victim is properly served. No one deserves to be a victim of a crime and it is the goal of the Crime Victims Unit to work toward making the victim of crime feel whole again.

The input and involvement of victims are important in every case. It is the policy of District

Attorney P. David Soares that a victim's interests and concerns are presented to the court. It is also important to the District Attorney that a victim's input is considered when determining appropriate recommendations concerning the disposition of any case.

Information and assistance available to victims include:

- Information about Crime Victims Rights
- Crisis intervention and emotional support
- Referrals for financial, medical, counseling, legal, and other community-based services
- Court accompaniment and in-court support
- Safety planning
- Orders of Protection
- Victim Impact Statements
- Property return and intervention with employers or creditors
- Claims for victim compensation
- Applications for inmate status notification
- Post-disposition referral services at state and/or county correctional facilities
- Restitution and reparation processes

If you are a victim and have any questions or concerns, please contact the Crime Victims Unit at (518) 694-8445.

For more information please contact Cecilia Walsh at (518) 275-4710.

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